

The Desert TO THE TRUE AMERICAN.

No. 35.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1799.

VOL. I.

THE TRIUMPH OF FRATERNAL FRIENDSHIP;

A TALE.

HERACLEA, a city upon the shore of the Euxine, in the kingdom of Pontus, was governed by a Senate. It long enjoyed perfect tranquillity. But, the slaves having risen in rebellion against their masters, the city was by this event overwhelmed in ruin, and rendered a scene of the most horrible cruelties.

The rebels had chosen for their leader one Clearchus, a man of dark and violent character, by whom crimes were esteemed as virtues whenever they could serve the purposes of his ambition. After forming a small army of those slaves, and making himself master of the city by their means, he called a meeting of the Senate, under pretence that he had terms for an accommodation to offer them. This, however, was nothing but a base artifice; for no sooner were the Senators assembled, than he ordered them to be seized, and inhumanely butchered. In the same manner were all the rich citizens apprehended and murdered. Nor was this all. The wives of the unhappy men who were put to death, being thus left widows, he gave them in marriage among his accomplices, and thus at once raised those slaves to the fortunes, the honours and the beds of their masters. The greater number of those virtuous women scorned to endure such an indignity, flew themselves, and fell upon the bodies of their husbands; and many of the young virgins imitating their courage, fell, in like manner, upon the bodies of their fathers and mothers.

Among these was one named Olympia, who was passionately beloved by a young stranger. He was no less dear to her. But, her tender affection for her father and mother would not suffer her either to survive them, or to leave them unrevenged. She felt herself prompted, a thousand times, to stab the tyrant with her own hand. Nothing but the impossibility of success diverted her from this enterprize; but the resolution she took up instead of it, was no less desperate. She sent for her lover, who instantly obeyed the summons. Olympia then pointing to the body of her mother which lay all bloody on the floor of the chamber, and weeping said to him; Kion, you see the effects of Clearchus's rage; to this extremity has he reduced my mother, after butchering my father. I must die; for surely, you would not wish to see me dragged to the bed of some wretched slave. But, you must avenge my death; if my entreaties cannot prevail with

you, remember, that it is my dying command. After uttering these words, she drew a poniard, and at two strokes wounded herself to the heart. She fell down expiring upon her mother's body; and could only add; Clearchus, O Kion, is my murderer; avenge my death upon Clearchus.

These words from the mouth of his dying mistress made a strong impression upon the lover's heart; and the consequence proved, that if he had not courage to avenge, he had, at least, too much affection to survive her.

This young stranger had a brother named Leonidas, younger than he, with whom he was united in the ties of the most perfect friendship of which there has ever been an instance among mankind. Neither their country, nor their family were known. Only, they were understood to have both studied in the school of Plato, and to have spent the last two years in travelling through different countries, out of a desire for knowledge. Their original intention had been to traverse all Asia, as they had already surveyed great part of Europe. But Kion's passion for Olympia, and the complaisance of Leonidas to so dear a brother had detained them both in Heraclea.

Kion, summoning up all the courage he could, ran hastily to his brother, and asked his assistance in avenging Olympia's death. Leonidas could refuse him nothing. And they resolved to act a part worthy of the love of the one, of the friendship of the other, and of the courage of both.

The tyrant never went out with fewer than two hundred guards about him. Thus invested with all the pomp of royalty, he imposed awe on those whom he had subdued, by the splendour of his apparatus and train. Not a day passed on which he did not signalize himself by some new murder. The remaining citizens were thus reduced to such despondency, that although they all wished for his death, none had courage to make any attempt upon his life. However Kion and Leonidas concerted between them this daring enterprize; and the glory of delivering Heraclea from the basest of tyrants combining to actuate them with the most pleasing emotions of love and friendship, they boldly executed the enterprize which they had resolved upon. Armed, each with a poniard, they repaired to the palace; under the pretext of some difference which they desired to be settled, they obtained access to Clearchus; and managed matters so well, that while he was listening to one of them, the other laid that infamous captain of slaves dead at his feet.

The guards immediately burst in upon them; but numbers could not terrify them. They threw themselves upon the pikes and lances of

these soldiers and continued to hack them down, till they were at last overpowered by numbers. They were saved from instant death, that they might be reserved to some horrible punishment; and with this intention, were shut up in the same chamber with the body of the tyrant, and under the custody of guards.

This deed was however soon noised through the whole city of Heraclea. The courage of the inhabitants was roused, they ran to arms, and impatient to obtain at least the bodies of their deliverers, who were said to be dead, crowded to the palace, besieged it, and at last obliged the slaves who were disposed as guards, to purchase their own lives by delivering up into their hands the two brave brothers.

They were overjoyed, as may easily be conceived, to find the heroes alive. Their satisfaction burst forth in a thousand passionate modes of expressing it. Some seized the body of the tyrant, dragged it through the streets, and tore it in pieces. Others eagerly fell at the feet of their deliverers, raised them upon their shoulders, and carried them in triumph to the senate-house. Amid the extravagance of their gratitude, they forgot to dress the wounds of Kion and Leonidas. The city assumed a new aspect. Joy re-animated all hearts, and glowed on every face.

Kion alone still remained absorbed in the deepest melancholy. That generous and faithful lover could not think to survive his mistress. He seemed as if, after executing her orders, he wished to go, and render her an account of what he had done. The two brothers desired that they might be left together. When Leonidas saw Kion steadily refuse the use of any remedy; brother, said he, I think I have shewn that I am not afraid of dying with you; but you may be still more assured that I cannot live without you. If you are resolved to die, tell me freely, that I may take no farther care of my own life. He then made the surgeons desist, and awaited his brother's reply. Kion looked tenderly upon him, and remonstrating that he had not the same reasons to make him wish to die, did all in his power to divert him from his purpose. But Leonidas protested that he would suffer no care to be taken of himself unless his brother would imitate him; and Kion was at last obliged to live that he might save his dear Leonidas. The cure was but slowly effected, and it was reported that they were dead; but heaven preserved them for still stranger adventures.

In imitation of Heraclea, most of the other cities of Pontus whose governors had usurped a tyrannical authority, now shook off the yoke. Those petty princes, in order to recover the authority of which they had been divested, entered into a combination with Satyrus, brother to

Clearchus. The cities leagued against them, levied troops for their defence, and gave the command to the valiant Ariamenes. He distinguished himself in that war by a thousand brave actions, which it is not necessary to repeat here. Only it may be mentioned, that he defeated Satyrus and his companions in five different battles and acquired such a reputation for valour, justice and liberality, that the people of Pontus and Cappadocia unanimously chose him their king. The citizens of Heraclea likewise joined the general league, and sent a body of troops to Ariamenes, under the conduct of Kion and Leonidas. The young warriors proved themselves worthy of the ideas which had been conceived of them; and the great Ariamenes several times confessed himself indebted for victory to their services. Satyrus was at last reduced to ask assistance from Lyfimachus king of Thrace, who hoping to become, sovereign of Asia himself, readily granted the aid which was requested.

Lyfimachus immediately began his march. He led an army of sixty thousand men, against Ariamenes; and the war was renewed with greater fury than ever. But the events of this war are to be noticed by us only so far as the two brothers were concerned in them. They went out to battle in the same armour; their casques and bucklers were decorated with the same figures and devices, representing the warmth and constancy of their friendship. They always fought together, or it may with more propriety be said, that they fought for one another. Kion was a second buckler to Leonidas, and Leonidas fought only to parry the strokes aimed at Kion. In short, it can hardly be said whether they distinguished themselves more by their friendship or valour.

Lyfimachus having lost a great battle, retired to Chalcedon. Ariamenes pursued hard after him, and invested the town, which stands upon the Propontis at the mouth of the Euxine. The sea washes its walls on one side; and a rapid stream had been turned into the trenches which defend it on the other. All the adjacent country is marshy; and it was therefore difficult to form the siege.

Yet these obstacles deterred not Ariamenes. With ships drawn from the neighbouring harbours he shut up every avenue against the Thracian prince. He at the same time drew his army nearer; and having made himself master of the outposts of the city in the course of a few days, he found means to use battering rams, by forming some bridges of boats. The force of the machines soon made a breach in the wall. The two brothers, then putting themselves at the head of their followers, mounted the breach, and against all opposition forced their way into the city.

Unfortunately, the impetuosity of their courage turned out to their disadvantage. One of the besieged attacking Kion, brought him on his knees to the ground. Leonidas urged furiously upon the assailant, and pursued him as he retired, regardless of all opposition. Kion rose up in the mean time, and would not desert his brother, in a case to which he had exposed himself on his account. He followed where Leonidas led, bravely parrying the blows which were laid thick upon him. At last, however,

they were overpowered by numbers, and remained in the power of the enemy. All their brave deeds served only to make them a better prize to Lyfimachus. The besiegers thus deprived of their aid, were repulsed, and the Thracians found time to repair their walls.

(To be concluded in our next.)

ON THE USE OF BOOKS.

It has often been made a question on my mind, Whether the multiplicity of books in circulation are an advantage or disadvantage to the morals of youth?—That every book ought to be investigated, and that with an impartial eye before we condemn it, is a fact incontestable. None but the prejudiced, the weak and the ignorant, will ever attempt to persuade youth from the pursuit of wisdom. A man possessed of the least spark of knowledge, would blush to advise others from the investigation of truth. That book has never yet been printed, which, when examined by the eye of reason and candor, did not contain something by which we may be profited. Yet, how numerous are they who will discard the writings of an author, merely because they have heard it was an improper book. How forcible is such reasoning! What will be the opinion of the rational part of the creation concerning such persons, if they argue with such inconsistency? Will they not justly conclude that a *weak* head, and *unprincipled* heart, guides their opinion? And while they continue thus to argue, they ought to reflect, if capable of reflection, that by condemning them without investigating one single principle whereby they may substantiate their charge, they expose themselves to censure and contempt. Thus we behold books too often branded with detestation, and consigned to oblivion, by those pests of society. For such they truly are, in my opinion, who have the audacity to persuade youth from a search after knowledge. Consider, O youth, that while you are obeying the dictates of these *all-knowing* men, you are sacrificing your own opinion at the shrine of *ignorance*. It is ignorance, united with impudence and conceit, that prompts them to trespass on your judgment. If they were duly to consider from what source their knowledge arises—if they would give themselves more time to reflect, and that with candor, they would find that all their profound search and erudition is nothing more than a “founding brass or tinkling symbol.” And that as long as they suffer themselves to be led by the wrong principles which some of our ancestors imbibed, they will be considered as a mere *BLANK* in society.

I will readily admit, that there are books which, by a constant application to them, will corrupt and lead astray the minds of youth, whose principles are not fully established. Yet, are they to be prohibited from the perusal of those books? No!—But guard them well against the danger, and then let them examine such authors with attention and candor. Let their youthful minds bestow on them their just sentences. By being thus accustomed to

judge for themselves, they will be able with clearness and precision to detect impostures, if any of that description should attempt to impose on their understandings. That they will have to combat with such characters at some period of their lives, is beyond a doubt, then being unprepared to answer them, will they not expose *THEIR* folly in obeying the dictates of men who are guided by self-conceited, superstitious, and bigotted principles. They are self-conceited, because *THEIR* knowledge is deemed by them to be *superior* to the rest of mankind; superstitious, because they worship as their Gods a select number of books by which their rule of life is formed, and from which they dare not deviate, lest they should by transgression seal their ruin; bigotted, because they are callous to the voice of reason, and determined to adhere to their own principles, however unfounded.—Such are the men to whose care the instruction of youth has been often committed; and who, instead of expanding and cultivating their juvenile minds with useful knowledge, by a thorough investigation of every book, have bred them up in superstitious ignorance, preparing them for the reception of every vice, which finally proves their ruin. C.

Examples of Long Life attained by Temperance.

HYPOCRATES avers, that excess in drinking is not so injurious as excess in eating. By filling the stomach with a variety of heterogeneous food, the most deplorable consequences must necessarily ensue: all the fine vessels and tubes of the human system must be choked and overloaded, and the current of the blood be interrupted, moving turbid and slow, through the oppression and violence done to nature.

By surfeiting and gluttony, the most fatal disorder must of necessity be occasioned, and the human body be soon converted into one universal infirmary. Nothing is so friendly to nature as temperance: it is conducive both to health of body and soundness of mind. If we lived but according to nature, and made her genuine dictates and calls the rules and standard of our eating and drinking, one-third of those diseases and evils which now infest human life would hardly be known. In proportion as luxury increased, the life of man was abbreviated. The seven-kings of Rome reigned longer than the first twenty Emperors.

The famous Lewis Carnaro, the Venetian, was of an infirm constitution till 40; at 80 he published his celebrated book, entitled, “Sure and certain methods of attaining a long and healthy life;” and having passed his hundredth year, died in his elbow chair without pain.

Aurenzebe, according to Gemilli, from the time that he usurped the throne, never once tasted either flesh, fish, or strong liquors, and died in 1707, near 100 years old.

Cicero, in his treatise on old age, introduces Cato, the Censor, in his 84th year, haranguing the people, and assisting the Senate, the people, his clients, and his friends, with his counsels.

The amiable Xenophon, who hath written so much in praise of temperance and virtue, lived to above 90; Xenocrates, died at 84. Zeno, the father of the Stoic Philosophy, attained his 98th year; and his immediate successor and disciple, Cleanthes, his 99th.

Pindar, who begins his poems with declaring water to be the best thing in nature, lived almost through a century.

Agefilaus, whose character is so beautifully portrayed by Xenophon, led armies at 80, established Nectanebus in his kingdom, and at 84, on his return from Egypt, finished a life adorned with singular glory.

Many more instances might easily be produced, where regularity of life, tranquility of mind, and simplicity of diet, have furnished long scenes of happiness even in this transitory world, and blessed the late evening of life with unimpaired vigour both of body and mind.

But such instances of longevity are very rarely to be found in courts and cities. Courts have ever been the sepulchres of temperance and virtue, and great cities the graves of the human species.

THE MEDLEY.

THE book entitled "L'Esprit." (Wit) and the poem of "La Pucelle" (the Maid) were prohibited in Switzerland. The magistrate appointed to search after these two works wrote to the senate of Berne—

"We have not been able to find in the whole Canton either Wit or Maid."

The Duke of New-Castle, it is generally known, was very fond of wit; and it frequently happened that men of wit and talents obtained great favours from him by a sprightly idea or saying, which could not be obtained by any other means. A certain author of that period, having been told his Grace's weak side, waited on him one morning early in Lincoln's inn fields; and having obtained admission, by stating his business to be of the utmost importance, addressed his Grace as follows:—"Having the honour of being related to your Grace, and knowing that you have many good things in your gift, I presume to wait on you to claim the relationship, and solicit your bounty in my behalf." "I beg your pardon," replied the Duke, "but as I have not the honour of knowing you, will you inform me how we are related?" "I need not inform your Grace," said the stranger, "that we are all related by ADAM." "Very true," again replied his Grace, "I acknowledge the tie; and in consideration of it, beg your acceptance of this half penny. And be assured, if every one, who is as nearly related to you as I am will give you as much, you will have no further occasion to solicit my bounty." This conduct so confounded the man of wit, that he retired without uttering another word.

COMPARE carefully and frequently the different ways in which the same person speaks with you and others before, and with you alone, or in the presence of others on the same topic.

The Dessert

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1799.

FOR THE DESSERT.

Mr. BRADFORD.

I observed in last Saturday's Dessert, a piece of IMPORTANT INFORMATION, signed *Theophilus*, concerning Evelina's run-away heart, which he supposes he saw, in travelling to the eastward at night; and that it emitted a pale light, like a stale fish, hung up in the dark, and entirely hollow. I suppose sir, that on the night the gentleman was travelling to the eastward, he must have been walking in the Market House, towards the place assigned to those who sell fish; where he has seen one of those aquatic animals, (a herring perhaps) by the light it emitted; and not knowing the difference, mistook it for a human heart; which after having caught, it inspired him with such pious feelings (being a phenomenon he could not comprehend) that he obeyed the scriptural command, by turning his eyes inward, when his enthusiastic imagination, has presented to him a heart quite hollow, and void of feeling, as might be expected, from the unfeeling comparison of a Lady's heart, being like a stale fish! O fye! Mr. Theophilus, a man of Sensibility, would not have descended to such sentiments, which have excited the displeasure of the puissant

DON QUIXOTTE.

—THE MORALIST—

COULD we draw back the covering of the tomb—could we see, what those are now who once were mortal—Oh! how would it surprize and grieve us, to behold the transformation that has taken place on every individual; grieve us to observe the dishonor done to our nature in general, within these subterraneous lodgments! Here, the sweet and winning aspect, that wore perpetually an attractive smile, grins horribly a naked, ghastly skull—The eye, that outshone the diamond's lustre, and glancing her lovely lightning into the most guarded heart—alas, where is it? Where shall we find the rolling sparkler? How are all those radiant glories totally—totally eclipsed! The tongue, that once commanded all the charms of harmony, and all the powers of eloquence, in this

strange land, "has forgot its cunning." Where are now those strains of melody, which ravished our ears? Where is that flow of persuasion, which carried captive our judgments? The great master of language and song, is become silent, as the night that surrounds him.

—What is the world to them,

Its pomps, its pleasures, and its nonsense all?

When in their beds of dust, in silence laid,

Are swiftly mould'ring into native clay:

'Tis nought to them, who bear the name of kings,

Or idly share the miser's golden stores;

Honor and wealth no longer's their pursuit,

While pleasures court, and beauty charms in vain;

For death has struck his sure unerring blow,

Their race is run, and time's to them no more.

ON GOOD BREEDING.

AS a precious stone, when unpolished, appears rough, so beauty without good breeding is awkward and unpleasing. Nature, indeed is at all times the same, but it does not discover its perfections till refined and improved by art. A genteel behaviour, though it cannot alter the shape and complexion of a fine woman, is, however necessary to make her agreeable. Virtue, modesty, good sense, and good nature, will not make her completely attractive without it. It is not sufficient that a woman has good features, and a beautiful person, unless she knows how to set off her charms to the best advantage: nor will the finest accomplishments make her irresistably alluring if they are not properly improved by a good education and embellished by a polite behaviour.

Hall of Hymen.

—MARRIED—

—On Thursday evening the 23th ult. by the Rev. Sator Clay, at the seat of Henry Pauling, Esq. in Montgomery county, JAMES MILNOR, Esq. of this city, to Miss ELEANOR PAULING.

—On Saturday evening the 2d inst. by the Rev. Dr. Ewing, Mr. CHARLES BIRD, of this city, to Miss GENNET P. NORTH, of Southwark.

—On Thursday evening the 7th inst. by the Rev. Dr. Rogers, Mr. GEORGE R. LAWTON, of Newport, Rhode-Island, merchant, to Miss ANN POLE, daughter of Edward Pole, Esq. of this city.

Repository of Death.

—DIED—

—On Thursday morning the 5th inst. after a short illness, Mr. JAMES KELSON.

—At New-Haven, Mr. SAMUEL GREEN, aged 56 years, one of the Editors of the Connecticut Journal.

—On Monday evening the 4th inst. at Baltimore, in the 53d year of her age, Mrs. ANN CALHOUN, consort of James Calhoun, mayor of that city.



FOR THE DESSERT.

TRANSLATION

OF A FAVOURITE FRENCH SONG.

Ye fragrant flow'rs forsake your Flora's train,
Far happier fates await your crimson bloom;
Go deck my love, the pride of ev'ry plain,
Your fading glories in her breast entomb.

Of beauty's age, a faithful type you shew,
Since, in one day, your infant sweets decay;
Then by your doom may youthful Lisette know,
What bliss sincere true pleasure can convey.

C.

FOR THE DESSERT.

TO EVELINA,

ON THE LOSS OF HER HEART.

ONE day in looking o'er the *Dessert*,
In lonesome hours, a pleasing resort,
An advertisement, struck my sight,
Concerning something's taking flight;
I thought, at first, a horse or cow,
Was stray'd or stole away, I vow;
But was amaz'd, I truly say,
To find a heart had run away.
A curious thing to advertise,
And fills each reader with surprise;
But, hold! it is but *half* that's flown,
Much better, than if *all* was gone.
In that, you're better off than some
Who lose the *whole*, when beat of drum
Doth call the gallant foldiers out
To exercise, and march about,
Dress'd in their uniform's so gay,
That lady's heart's at *home* can't stay.
Now, therefore, take my kind advice,
And, for the future, be more nice
In keeping every access watch'd,
That when the thief doth come he shall be
catch'd,
Or with much cheerfulness appear
And look as if you did not care;
So, when he sees you are not griev'd,
He'll come again, then have him seiz'd.

If all these remedies should fail,
Set up the other half for sale,
And then, some day, without a doubt,
You'll surely find the robber out.

EXPERIMENTUS.

MONIBA,

A TRUE STORY.

MONIBA, pride of Afric's plain,
The beauty of the burning zone,
Was led to Hymen's holy fane,
By Zanga, prince of Ebo's throne.

Six moons revolving, saw them blest;
The seventh, a base, enslaving band
Lodg'd the cragg'd ball in Zanga's breast,
And sever'd love's united hand.

In vain the widow's piteous wail;
Ner heard her soul-distressing cries;
Borne passive on the pinion'd gale,
To distant climes the mourner hies.

There, doom'd to rounds of endless toil,
Her life was soon to waste away,
On curst Port Royal's torrid soil,
Amid the fires of blazing day.

Her child—the tender babe unborn,
Must share its mother's iron fate:
Doom'd ere it saw the rising morn,
To horrid slavery's death-like weight.

Moniba had a feeling mind;
Oft had she wept at misery's tale:
The tender heart, by love refin'd,
With firmness bids misfortune hail.

Confin'd below, in bolted chains,
Deep musing o'er a world of woes,
The sudden gush of spouting veins,
At once announce parturient throes.

Rais'd to the deck—the ey'd the wave,
Plung'd with her babe beneath the flood,
And buried in a watry grave,
Escap'd the madd'ning sons of blood.

ON HAPPINESS.

"Whatever diff'rent paths mankind pursue,
Oh, Happiness! 'tis thou they keep in view."

MRS. ROWE.

THOU art the being that the whole race of
mortals are in search of! or more properly,
thou art the *phantom* they seek! how different
their pursuit! The king endeavours to find thee
in his palace, while surrounded by his courtiers.
The courtier thinks he is happy when paying

adulation to his prince. The statesman pur-
sues thee, when fulfilling the duties of his
station. The citizen seeks thee in his family.
The debauchee frequents the brothel, in hopes
to find thee. The seducer is happy when be-
traying to the paths of infamy the unwary fe-
male. The votary of religion imagines thou
art no where to be found but in the duties it
enjoins. The poet seeks thee in his garret.
The critic thinks he has thee in possession while
venom trickles from his pen. The mariner is
aiming at thee while he explores the "trackless
path." The warrior is so fascinated with thee,
that even rivers of blood cannot impede his pro-
gress.

The beautiful SYLVIA too, was grasping at
thee, while at her feet were expiring a groupe of
lovers, whom she affected to treat with cold
disdain; no kind looks, no tender glances were
bestowed. She completely acted the coquet.
At length she promised her hand to SIGISMUND;
but in the short space of time that was to pre-
cede their nuptials, she manifested the greatest
partiality for the libertine FREDERICK. She
afterwards said it was only done to try the firm-
ness of her lover. Her folly appeared obvious
when too late. When SIGISMUND beheld him-
self slighted after the promise she had made him,
he imagined he was odious in her eyes. He
chose, therefore, for his partner, one that would
not act deceitfully, the blushing LYDIA became
his bride.

Do these different characters follow after
happiness. They do—And are they happy?
—Go to the monarch, seated on his throne,
with his brows encircled with a crown of gold;
to him let the question be put. Should he an-
swer, "I am the only happy mortal," would it
not induce you to laugh in his face, and tell
him that you were by far the happiest?

L. B.

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